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April 10, 2026

The Virginia-Highland Civic Association  
Transportation & Safety Committee  
C/O Amy Harward via email: amygharward@gmail.com

Subject: Monroe Drive Safe Street

The Atlanta Department of Transportation (ATLDOT) is in receipt of the letter dated March 31, 2026, provided via email from the Virginia-Highland Civic Association. ATLDOT staff have reviewed the letter and the marked construction plan pages provided with the email. The following provides information and responses to the input provided.

### Speed Limit on Monroe

**VHCA Input:** We request reconsideration of the proposed speed limit. South Boulevard is planned for 25 MPH, yet Monroe increases to 30 MPH after crossing Ponce De Leon Ave. Given Monroe's residential character and the presence of Midtown High School, this increase sends the wrong message to drivers. Students cross Monroe throughout the day, not just during morning and afternoon peaks. Lower speeds are critical to reducing the severity of crashes involving pedestrians. Reducing the speed limit would:

- Align with the City's Vision Zero plan
- Reflect Monroe's designation on the City's High-Injury Network (#12 highest-score corridor)
- Support the residential nature of the corridor
- Protect Midtown High School students and families

The street design should reinforce that Monroe is a neighborhood street, not a fast-moving thoroughfare.

### ATLDOT Response:

City of Atlanta Code of Ordinance sets the default speed limit at 25 mph. Per the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) List of Roadways (LIR) approved for speed detection devices, Monroe Dr NE from Ponce De Leon Ave NE to Piedmont Cir NE is approved for a posted speed limit of 30 mph with a 25 mph school zone for Midtown High School. To reduce the speed limit to 25 mph on some or all of the Monroe Dr NE corridor, ATLDOT would need to conduct a formal Engineering and Traffic Investigation (speed study) that complies with the requirements of GDOT Policy 6780-4. This study would document existing traffic speeds, accident history, road design, and roadside development. The findings of the study are submitted to the GDOT District 7 Office for review, followed by state approval and final approval by the Department of Public Safety (DPS). This request from VHCA has been shared with the ATLDOT Office of Strategy and Planning for consideration for next steps. As additional information is available it will be shared.



## Crosswalks

**VHCA Input:** We request marked crosswalks at every crossing of each intersection to improve pedestrian safety, particularly for students walking to Midtown High School and neighborhood residents. Key intersections include:

- Kanuga
- Cooleedge
- Cresthill
- Elmwood
- Orme
- Hillpine
- Yorkshire
- Cumberland
- Sherwood

Currently, some four-way intersections have only two or three marked crossings, and in some locations, crosswalks are being removed. While signalized crossings may influence these decisions, removing crossings reduces predictability and increases risk.

At minimum:

- No existing crosswalks should be removed
- Additional crossings should be added wherever feasible
- Crosswalks should be used as visual cues to slow traffic

### **ATLDOT Feedback:**

Within the project limits (excluding the intersection with 10<sup>th</sup> St and the Atlanta Beltline) there are 22 side street intersections considered. Each of the intersections was evaluated for appropriate pedestrian crossing treatments. Considerations were made for installation of basic crosswalk warning signage, installation of a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB), installation of a Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB) or presence of a full traffic signal. There are 26 marked crosswalks at these intersections today with 29 provided in the approved plans. One of the 10 existing signals will be replaced with a roundabout, and in addition to the one existing PHB, two PHBs and six RRFBs are provided to enhance visibility of pedestrian crossings of Monroe Dr.

Enhanced crosswalk markings paired with signs and signals can effectively slow traffic by providing better advanced visibility of pedestrians. While all four legs of a four-legged intersection can have crosswalks it is not a requirement. The installation of a RRFB at a single crossing across the mainline roadway for both four-legged and three-legged intersections provides focused visibility of pedestrians to drivers of vehicles.

The following are the treatments provided at the specific locations listed in the letter:

- Kanuga – existing full signal (crosswalk will remain at existing location)
- Cooleedge – relocate crossing to Kanuga St location for increased visibility
- Cresthill – proposed RRFB
- Elmwood – proposed RRFB
- Orme – proposed RRFB
- Hillpine – relocate crossing to proposed PHB at Westminster Dr NE
- Yorkshire – proposed RRFB
- Cumberland – new crosswalk is not proposed due to the proximity to the existing PHB
- Sherwood – new crosswalk is not proposed due to the proximity to the existing signalized intersection at Piedmont Ave and nearby existing PHB



## Roundabout at Park

**VHCA Input:** We understand the roundabout may not be constructed in the first phase. Please confirm and clarify the interim plan. The intersection of Park and Monroe is the most dangerous on the corridor. If the roundabout is delayed, interim safety measures are critical. At minimum:

- Remove slip lanes
- Improve pedestrian refuge
- Add traffic calming

We also note:

- The current design remains challenging for cyclists
- Significant tree removal is proposed
- Limited replacement landscaping is shown

We request additional landscaping, including overstory trees, to maintain neighborhood character and provide pedestrian buffering.

### **ATLDOT Feedback:**

Phase 2 construction is dependent on the completion of the right-of-way acquisition phase, but ATLDOT expects the construction to start as Phase 1 construction is completed. The requested interim measures will not be provided at this time, but may be considered if there are delays in right-of-way acquisition that impact construction timing.

The roundabout has been designed to accommodate bicycle traffic along Park Dr NE and conforms with design standards and guidelines. City engineers will complete an additional review to confirm the plans are correct before construction begins. The complexity of designing the roundabout appropriately for vehicular traffic and accommodating cyclists with pedestrians results in a multi-use shared path around the edge of the roundabout. The required width of this path requires removal of existing trees in close proximity to or within the roadway right-of-way. Tree replacement in the public right-of-way is being completed through coordination with the city arborist; there are limited appropriate locations along the edges of the roundabout due to the width of the multi-use path, and setbacks from the pedestrian crossings to provide clear line of sight. ATLDOT may be able to enter into an agreement with the neighborhood for landscaping in the roundabout center island. There will be limited available landscape space in the divider islands to maintain clear line of site between vehicles and pedestrians.

## 8th Street to 10th Street (*Midtown High School Area*)

**VHCA Input:** This segment experiences heavy student foot traffic and requires stronger safety measures. We recommend:

- A pedestrian scramble at 8th Street
- No-turn-on-red restrictions consistent with City of Atlanta policy
- Reducing the five-lane configuration and widening the east-side sidewalk
- Creating a bicycle connection between 8th Street and the Virginia Avenue cycle track
- Increasing landscaping buffers on both sides of Monroe
- Requiring a 5' landscape buffer for the proposed Woody's parking lot



Students cross here throughout the day, often in groups. The design should prioritize safe crossings and comfortable walking space for pedestrians of all ages and mobilities.

**ATLDOT Feedback:**

There have been significant changes in this area with the completion of the Monroe Dr NE intersection with 10<sup>th</sup> St NE and the Atlanta Beltline Eastside Trail crossing. The design of the Monroe Dr /Boulevard Complete Street project is considering installation of a pedestrian scramble at the 8<sup>th</sup> St NE intersection and additional upgrades to the existing signal, including No Right on Red restrictions. The remaining signalized intersections have been reviewed for No Right on Red restrictions and have added it to the proposed Virginia Ave signal.

Removal of lanes between 8<sup>th</sup> St NE and Virginia Ave NE were considered. The high school requested the southbound dedicated right turn lane on to 8<sup>th</sup> St remain to facilitate bus movement. Data supports the need for the remaining lane configuration and transitions. Widening to the east to provide the additional width to support the cycle connection between 8<sup>th</sup> St NE and Virginia Ave NE would impact approximately 20 parking spaces and require additional right-of-way acquisition and construction of a retaining wall. ATLDOT will continue to consider the possibility of a bicycle connection to the south side of the high school and would encourage users to use the Beltline connection to the 10<sup>th</sup> St NE cycle track and enhanced crossing opportunities into the high school campus at the PHB on 10<sup>th</sup> St and the full signal at Charles Allen.

The addition of additional landscaping along both sides of Monroe Dr NE in this location would require relocating the existing sidewalk outside the right-of-way, construction of potentially substantial retaining walls, and the acquisition of additional right-of-way. ATLDOT will address landscape buffer requirements during the right-of-way negotiation phase with the owner of Woody's.

**Amsterdam and Monroe**

**VHCA Input:** This is one of the most dangerous intersections on the corridor and will see increased pedestrian activity with the development at Amsterdam Walk. We request:

- A pedestrian scramble
- Repair of existing pedestrian signals
- A concrete refuge island on the north side
- No-turn-on-red restrictions

These improvements will help protect both neighborhood residents and students traveling between destinations.

**ATLDOT Feedback:**

At this time a pedestrian scramble installation is not warranted; however, ATLDOT will continue to work with the Amsterdam Walk developer to make enhancements to the Monroe Dr NE at Amsterdam Ave NE intersection, including consideration of a pedestrian scramble. The Monroe Dr Safe Street project provides new signal equipment for this intersection, including pedestrian signals. The design consultant is updating the plans to replicate the concrete refuge island shown on the south leg of the intersection on the north side. The intersection was reviewed for No Right on Red restrictions; installation was not recommended. ATLDOT will continue to monitor signalized intersections and review conditions for warrant of No Right on Red restrictions.



## Piedmont and Monroe

**VHCA Input:** Minimal changes are proposed at this high-risk intersection. We request:

- Median bumps or other traffic calming measures
- Additional pedestrian protection

This intersection currently feels unsafe for pedestrians and should be improved as part of this project.

### **ATLDOT Feedback:**

A request has been provided to the Engineering team to determine if centerline hardening is feasible for installation at the intersection of Monroe Dr NE and Piedmont Ave NE. The upgrades to the existing ADA ramps, the curb bulb out at the northeast quadrant of the intersection, and the realignment of crosswalks to shorten the crossing length depict the upgrades possible without widening the roadway to create pedestrian refuge islands on the four legs of the intersection. ATLDOT will continue to assess the intersection to determine if future enhancements are possible.

## Trees and Landscaping

**VHCA Input:** Numerous trees are proposed for removal without replacement, including at Cooledge and Park Drive. There are also many missed opportunities to add trees throughout the corridor. Trees:

- Provide a buffer between pedestrians and traffic
- Encourage slower driving speeds
- Preserve neighborhood character
- Improve the walking environment for students and residents

We request tree replacement and additional landscaping wherever possible.

### **ATLDOT Feedback:**

Tree removal and recompense is following the current tree protection ordinance and replacement plans are being developed by an arborist in coordination with the City arborist. Limited opportunities within the right-of-way are available to plant trees in a sustainable way that will support longevity and contribution to the city's canopy.

## **Additional Comments** *(on the marked plans and not addressed above)*

**VHCA Input:** Sheet 13-001: Why no zebra crossing at 8<sup>th</sup> St?

**ATLDOT Feedback:** These crosswalk markings will be included and are shown on 26-0001 Signing and Marking Plans

**VHCA Input:** Sheet 13-003: Previous comments requested this corner radius be squared to reduce turn speeds and reduce pedestrian crossing distances.

**ATLDOT Feedback:** The curb return adjustment is planned to be addressed with striping and the City is considering the addition of other tactical hardening devices to further enforce this adjustment.

**VHCA Input:** Sheet 13-006: new curb is needed here - existing curb is beyond repair.

**ATLDOT Feedback:** An adjustment to the plans and curb installation will be made in the field as needed.



**VHCA Input:** Sheet 13-011: Should be matching curb extension given this is existing striping to reduce crossing distance. Retain sidewalk/curb extension here to accommodate piedmont park ped/bike traffic to Cumberland.

**ATLDOT Feedback:** The curb extension on the opposite side of the street is to address the transition from curb and gutter to header curb. The design engineer will review to determine if a new curb extension is possible on the south side of the road and if the extension can be carried to the Cumberland Road intersection.

**VHCA Input:** Sheet 26-0015: Retain existing no turn on red restrictions.

**ATLDOT Feedback:** The existing No Right on Red restrictions will remain at the intersection of Monroe Dr NE and Montgomery Ferry Dr NE.

**VHCA Input:** Sheet 26-0023: To reduce conflicts, keep lane reduction striping until Kanuga intersection. No need to add lane until after intersection.

**ATLDOT Feedback:** The lane taper and storage length for the dedicated right turn lane and left turn lane at the intersection of Virginia Ae NE have dictated the placement of the striping to define the transition from on-street parking with one travel lane to the two turn lanes. The design engineer will confirm placement.

**VHCA Input:** Sheet 29-003: Has community been informed about 100% tree loss in front of businesses?

**ATLDOT Feedback:** Yes, as part of the tree permit requirements, private property owners are notified of potential tree impacts and replanting documentation is prepared.

ATLDOT thanks the Virginia-Highland Civic Association and the Transportation and Safety Committee for the input on the final plans for the Monroe Dr Safe Street project and appreciates the opportunity to share feedback on these various topics. Continued engagement through construction of the project will be provided by ATLDOT through various methods so the community remains informed of progress.

Sincerely,

Signed by:



**Lenor M. Bromberg, PE, F.ASCE**

*Deputy Commissioner, Office of Engineering*

Atlanta Department of Transportation (ATLDOT)

- cc: Councilmember Alex Wan, Council District 6
- Councilmember Kelsea Bond, Council District 2
- Commissioner Solomon Caviness, IV, ATLDOT
- Assistant Commissioner James Garland, ATLDOT
- Deputy Commissioner Wesley Parkmond, ATLDOT Office of Capital Delivery
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